PRESS RELEASE

Contact name _____   Agency _____
Date _____   Phone _____

WELLNESS PROGRAM OFFERS FREE MEDICATIONS

Alabamians age 55 and over has a new opportunity to manage their health and improve their physical well-being. The **Alabama Department of Senior Services** in collaboration with the **Alabama Department of Public Health** is expanding the highly successful SenioRx Program by establishing **SenioRx/Wellness**.

"The key to healthy aging is living a healthier lifestyle now," Alabama Department of Senior Services Executive Director Irene Collins said. "SenioRx/Wellness will give people the tools they need to make informed decisions about healthy eating habits, proper exercise and managing chronic illnesses."

SenioRx/Wellness targets individuals age 55 and over that are prone to chronic diseases or have been diagnosed with chronic diseases requiring daily medications. The program aims to reduce the risk factors for chronic diseases and disabilities by addressing disease self management among Alabama's older population. **Chronic diseases are the leading cause of death in Alabama.** Alabama ranks **above the national average in deaths due to heart disease**, **ranks third in terms of hypertension**, and **diabetes is the sixth leading cause of death** in Alabama. Lastly, **Alabama has one of the highest levels of adult obesity in the nation.**

"It is our hope that this new initiative of the highly successful SenioRx program will help Alabamians manage their chronic illnesses earlier and prevent more serious health problems later in life," Collins said. "Our partnership with the Alabama Department of Public Health will help us accomplish that goal."

[Local AAA Director quote]

Individuals age 55 and over that want to reduce risk factors leading to chronic illness as well as individuals currently taking daily medication are encouraged to call **1-800-AGE-LINE (243-5463)** for more information. S**eniorRx/Wellnss Program** is designed to encourage individuals to take advantage of our self-management wellness education program.

Since July 2002, SenioRx has saved Alabamians 55 years of age and over $136,000,000. The program provides free and/or low cost prescription drugs through pharmaceutical assistance programs.
With this new initiative, **Alabama Department of Senior Services** has begun placing a foundation in which to build on our commitment to **reduce fatigue and pain**, to

promote better health and wellness, to **teach medication management practices**, and to improve the quality of life for Alabama's older population depending on life-sustaining medications.

For more information contact **<u>SRX Coordinator's name</u>** at **1-800-AGE-LINE (243-5463)** and/or any other local information deemed necessary by AAA.